

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y TAGS INFO ADDED

E.O. 11662: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, CASC DR, SP

SUBJECT: ESCUELA CARIBE: CARIBE-VISTA YOUTH SAFARI

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 0206, JAN. 13, 1975

1. BRAD GINTER, SUB-DIRECTOR OF THE ESCUELA CARIBE IN JARABACOA (FORMERLY KNOWN AS CARIBE-VISTA YOUTH SAFARI), RECENTLY CAME TO THE EMBASSY TO CONVEY HIS CONCERN AT GROWING PUBLIC CRITICISM AND LOCAL OPPOSITION TO THE SCHOOL. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY THAT A WELL KNOWN TV NEWS COMMENTATOR HAS DEVOTED THREE BROADCASTS TO CRITICISMS OF THE SCHOOL AND THAT A PETITION SIGNED BY LEADING MEMBERS OF THE JARABACOAN COMMUNITY WAS BEING PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDING THAT THE SCHOOL CEASE ITS ACTIVITIES IN JARABACOA.

2. AS A RESULT OF THESE CONVERSATIONS THE CONSUL GENERAL VISITED JARABACOA TO ASSESS THE SITUATION AT FIRST HAND. IN THE COURSE OF HIS VISIT THE CONSUL GENERAL SPOKE WITH THE MAYOR, THE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL, A DEPUTY TO THE NATIONAL LEGISLATURE, SEVERAL LEADING BUSINESSMEN, THE HEAD OF THE JARABACOAN CRUZADA DE AMOR, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE DIRECTORS OF TWO CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AND A PARISH PRIEST.

3. WITHOUT EXCEPTION EACH PERSON SAID, THOUGH WITH VARYING DEGREES OF VEHEMENCE, THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE SCHOOL LEFT JARABACOA; THE BUSINESSMEN SAID THAT IT DIDN'T AFFECT THEM ONE WAY OR THE OTHER BUT THAT THEY WERE AWARE OF THE ANTIPATHY THAT

THE COMMUNITY FELT TOWARD THE SCHOOL AND THEY FELT IT WAS WISER TO YIELD TO THE CONSENSUS OF THE COMMUNITY. THOSE INTERVIEWED RECOUNTED ALLEGED INCIDENTS TO SUPPORT THE GENERAL VIEW THAT THE STUDENTS WERE CONTRIBUTING TO THE DELINQUENCY OF THE LOCAL YOUTH BY IMMORAL ACTS AND THE USE OF DRUGS. THE CRITICISMS (BASED MOSTLY ON WHAT HAD BEEN HEARD RATHER THAN WITNESSED DIRECTLY), FOCUSED ON THE BEHAVIOR OF THE GIRLS FROM THE ESCUELA CARIBE WHILE COMMENTS ON THE BOYS WERE LESS CRITICAL. (IN CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, MR. GINTER HAD DENIED USE OF DRUGS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A FEW INCIDENTS HAD OCCURRED OF SEXUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GIRL STUDENTS AND LOCAL BOYS, BUT HE CLAIMED THAT REPORTS OF THE PREVALENCE OF SUCH BEHAVIOR WERE HIGHLY EXAGGERATED AND THAT THE SCHOOL WAS EXERCISING CLOSE SUPERVISION TO PREVENT FUTURE INCIDENTS OF MISBEHAVIOR.)

4. THE MAYOR SHOWED THE CONSUL GENERAL THE PETITION WHICH CALLED FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE SCHOOL FROM JARABACOA AND ADDED THAT HE HAD NOT AS YET PRESENTED IT TO THE CITY COUNCIL. BOTH THE MAYOR AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO RESOLVE THE QUESTION IN A QUIET WAY AND AVOID ANY PRECIPITATE ACTION. THE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL MENTIONED THAT SHOULD IT BE DECIDED TO RECOMMEND ACTION AGAINST THE SCHOOL, THE METHOD WOULD BE TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH PRESIDENT BALAGUER.

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5. IT WAS EVIDENT FROM THESE CONVERSATIONS THAT NONE OF THE PERSONS INTERVIEWED HAD MADE ANY EFFORT TO COMMUNICATE THEIR CONCERN TO THE SCHOOL AND THAT THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS PREDISPOSITION TO BELIEVE THE WORST.

6. FOLLOWING THIS ROUND OF CONVERSATIONS THE CONSUL GENERAL MET WITH THE SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS HIS IMPRESSIONS. NOTING THAT THE SITUATION WAS RAPIDLY BECOMING UNTENABLE FOR THE SCHOOL, HE SUGGESTED THAT SCHOOL OFFICIALS PROMPTLY ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES TO PRECLUDE A PRECIPITATE DECISION AND THAT THEY MAINTAIN MEANINGFUL LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE COMMUNITY. RECOGNIZING THAT MOST OF THE CRITICISM WAS DIRECTED AGAINST THE BEHAVIOR OF THE GIRLS, MR. GINTER AND HIS ASSOCIATES SUGGESTED THAT THIS (POSSIBLY DEPARTURE OF THE GIRLS) MIGHT BE AN AREA OF ACCOMMODATION WITH THE TOWN.

7. THE EMBASSY WILL MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL AND ADVISE OF DEVELOPMENT.
AXELROD

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